

Amendments to the claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (*currently amended*) Method for the differential-diagnostic early detection and detection, for the assessment of the severity, and for the assessment of the success of a therapeutic treatment of sepsis and severe infections, in particular sepsis-like ~~systematic-systemic~~ infection, characterized in that the content of at least one peptide prohormone other than procalcitonin and/or of a partial peptide derived therefrom, which is not the mature hormone obtainable from said peptide prohormone, is determined in a sample of a biological fluid of a patient, and the presence of a sepsis or sepsis-like ~~systematic-systemic~~ infection, its severity and/or the success of a therapeutic treatment are determined from the detected presence and/or amount of the determined peptide prohormone.

2. (*currently amended*) Method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the peptide prohormone is selected from the group consisting of a ~~pro-gastric-releasing-peptide (proGRP),~~ pro-endothelin-1 (pro-END), pro-brain-natriuretic peptide (proBNP), pro-atrial-natriuretic peptide (pro-ANP or pro-ANF), ~~pro-leptin, pro-neuropeptide Y, pro-somatostatin, pro-neuropeptideYY or~~ pro-adrenomedullin (pro-ADM).

3. (*currently amended*) Method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein ~~by the determination~~a partial peptide is detected which differs from the known complete peptide prohormone by the lack of a dipeptide at the amino terminus thereof, as it can be cleaved off by dipeptidyl-aminopeptidase IV (DP IV or DAP IV or CD26) from the end of a peptide.

4. (*currently amended*) Method according to claim 3, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the dipeptide is an Xaa-Pro dipeptide, Xaa representing the amino-terminal amino acid of the complete prohormone peptide.

5. (*currently amended*) Method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said determination of said peptide prohormone is carried out as an immunoassay or precipitation assay, and a diagnosis of the presence of sepsis or severe sepsis-like infections is made if the concentration of the peptide prohormone determined is significantly higher than the values for the same prohormone observed in healthy normal persons.

6. (*currently amended*) Method for the differential-diagnostic early detection, for the detection, and for the assessment of the severity and for the assessment of the success of a therapeutic treatment of a sepsis and sepsis-like ~~systematic-systemic~~ infections, characterized in that the content of dipeptidyl-peptidase IV (DP IV; dipeptidyl-aminopeptidase IV; DAP IV or CD26) is determined in a serum or plasma sample of a patient and the presence of a sepsis or sepsis-like ~~systematic-systemic~~ infection is diagnosed on the basis of a concentration of dipeptidyl-peptidase IV which is significantly reduced compared with healthy normal subjects.

7. (*currently amended*) Method according to claim 2, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein ~~by the determination~~ a partial peptide is detected which differs from the known complete peptide prohormone by the lack of a dipeptide at the amino terminus thereof, as it can be cleaved off by dipeptidyl-aminopeptidase IV (DP IV or DAP IV or Cd26) from the end of a peptide.